

## **Byelaw H: Student Media Charter**

### **1. Establishment**

This charter has been established by representatives from both Trustees of the Students' Union and the elected leaders of the Student Media Outlets. It has been developed in response to the specific needs of Student Media Outlets above and beyond those of other student groups.

The purpose of this document is:

- i. To establish Student Media Outlets as editorially independent student groups within the Students' Union, subject to relevant legislation
- ii. To protect Student Media Outlets with respect to their role in holding the Students' Union to account
- iii. To protect the Trustees of the Students' Union with respect to their role as those legally responsible for the activities of the charity
- iv. To make all of the above transparent and accessible for students

This charter will form part of the Union's constitution as a byelaw. It is the responsibility of the Orbital Editor, Insanity Radio Station Manager, and Rhubarb TV Station Manager that their members are made aware of this charter and adhere to it.

### **2. Rights & Responsibilities**

RHSU and the student media outlets recognise the following rights and responsibilities:

- i. The right of Student Media Outlets to access non-confidential information
- ii. The right of Student Media Outlets to freedom of the press and independent reporting within the relevant legal constraints
- iii. The right of Student Media Outlets to inform the student community of issues in the public interest
- iv. The right of Student Media Outlets to appropriate funding, support, and suitable office space and equipment, in line with resources provided to other ratified student groups
- v. The right of RHSU to accurate reporting of Union activities by Student Media Outlets, and the opportunity to reply
- vi. The right of RHSU to ensure that Student Media Outlets do not produce material or content that may cause the Union or University legal harm
- vii. The responsibility of RHSU to ensure the duty of care of its members and that Student Media Outlets do not produce material or content that may negatively affect the wellbeing of Union members or staff

### **3. Supervising Trustee**

If not set out elsewhere in the governing document, the Board of Trustees shall appoint an Officer Trustee to act as Supervising Trustee with respect to Student Media Outlets.

The duties of this role are as follows:

- i. To act as the nominated 'publisher of content', and lead Trustee with respect to risk management on behalf of the Board, working closely with the Student Media Outlet committees
- ii. To act as the point of contact for all statutory / regulatory bodies, such as OFCOM

- iii. To ensure relevant training and support is provided to Student Media Outlet committees, supporting them through relevant RHSU processes such as the annual grant allocation
- iv. To act as a conduit between Student Media Outlet committees and the wider RHSU / College community
- v. To coordinate the work of the different Student Media Outlets to ensure collaboration and joined-up working

#### 4. Media Outlet Committees

Student Media Outlet committees are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the group, and as such, are accountable for the actions taken by individuals in their name. Their constitutions must include formal processes to enable appropriate action to be taken to ensure members adhere to relevant regulation.

RHSU is responsible for ensuring that committee members receive sufficient training and support in order for them to be able to fulfil these duties. This should include (but not limited to) topics such as media law, privacy, election law, copyright and other journalistic best practice.

#### 5. Policies & Procedures

RHSU is responsible for developing relevant policies and procedures that support the work of Student Media Outlets. These should be developed in partnership with the relevant committees.

The Chief Executive will designate a lead staff member to work alongside the Supervising Trustee to review policies and procedures as required, and to take ownership of their implementation.

All Student Media Outlets are responsible for developing standard operating guidance documents that ensure continuity of operational practice for subsequent committees.

#### 6. Complaints

RHSU's statutory complaints procedure should be used by all parties where applicable.

With specific reference to the role of the Supervising Trustee in managing risk on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

- i. If there is disagreement over a decision to remove or prevent content from being published (in any form) and a formal complaint is made, the President is usually required to investigate it (supported by the Chief Executive) in reasonable time to allow student media outlets to meet relevant deadlines.
- ii. Any decision should be communicated to Trustees at the next available meeting.

#### 7. Major Incidents

As part of the College's approach to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all individuals on campus, it operates a formal *major incident* process. This applies to events and incidents that are likely to present an imminent threat to human life.

At the point where a *major incident* has been identified, it is the responsibility of RHSU (usually the Supervising Trustee and head of each Student Media Outlet) to meet as soon as possible, to enable a briefing to take place on the incident.

It is RHSU's responsibility to work with the College to enable Student Media Outlets to cover the incident effectively and appropriately.

All reporting during a major incident should be factual, accurate, and include links to official communication channels where possible.